



U.S. Department of Justice

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**MASSACHUSETTS WOMAN SENTENCED IN COUNTERFEIT CHECK SCHEME**

**CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE** - United States Attorney Tom Colantuono announced that **MEAGAN OLIVER**, age 24, of 86 Old Ironside Way, Charlestown, Massachusetts, was sentenced to probation for 5 years, and home confinement for 6 months, for her participation in a bank fraud scheme involving counterfeit checks.

**OLIVER** pleaded guilty last September to charges that she cashed counterfeit checks as part of a scheme to obtain money from branches of Fleet Bank, First Massachusetts Bank and Sovereign Bank in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. **OLIVER** admitted cashing fifty-eight counterfeit checks totaling over \$39,000 at various bank branches in November and December, 2000. The counterfeit checks were written on valid accounts owned by various Massachusetts businesses. **OLIVER** was one of eight individuals charged in connection with the counterfeit check ring, which was organized by **GEORGE WASSOUF** of Lawrence, Massachusetts. **WASSOUF** pleaded guilty to bank fraud charges involving counterfeit and stolen checks totaling more than a quarter million dollars and is currently serving a 33-month term of imprisonment. At the sentencing hearing, U.S. District Judge Stephen McAuliffe also ordered **OLIVER** to make restitution to the defrauded banks in the amount of \$38,288.56. The Court also granted the government's motion to reduce the sentence that otherwise would have been imposed, based on **OLIVER**'s cooperation with Essex County, Massachusetts prosecutors. **OLIVER**'s cooperation substantially assisted in the prosecution of an individual who was responsible for a brutal stabbing that took place in Lawrence, Massachusetts in November, 2000.

Following the plea hearing, U.S. Attorney Colantuono said: "This is an excellent example of how federal and local law enforcement agents work in concert with each another to combat fraud. I would like to thank the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Secret Service, the Salem, New Hampshire Police Department and the Lawrence, Massachusetts Police Department for their thorough investigation." The case was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Michael Gunnison.